

Kids revel in bedlam at Variety bash

PURE bedlam. That's what you get when you take about 2000 children, parents, performers, and volunteers, one Santa, and piles of donated top-of-the-line toys.

Darwin Showground's Foskey Pavilion was shaking yesterday from the swell of near-solid sound generated by Variety NT's Special Children's Christmas party.

Neighbours' Dr Karl Kennedy — actor Alan Fletcher — was also there.

Leanyer's Callum Mayo, 10, with brother Byron, 9, took full advantage of the games and activities.



HAPPY: Jenny Freeman, Thomas, 8, and Nakeya Owens, 3, at the party

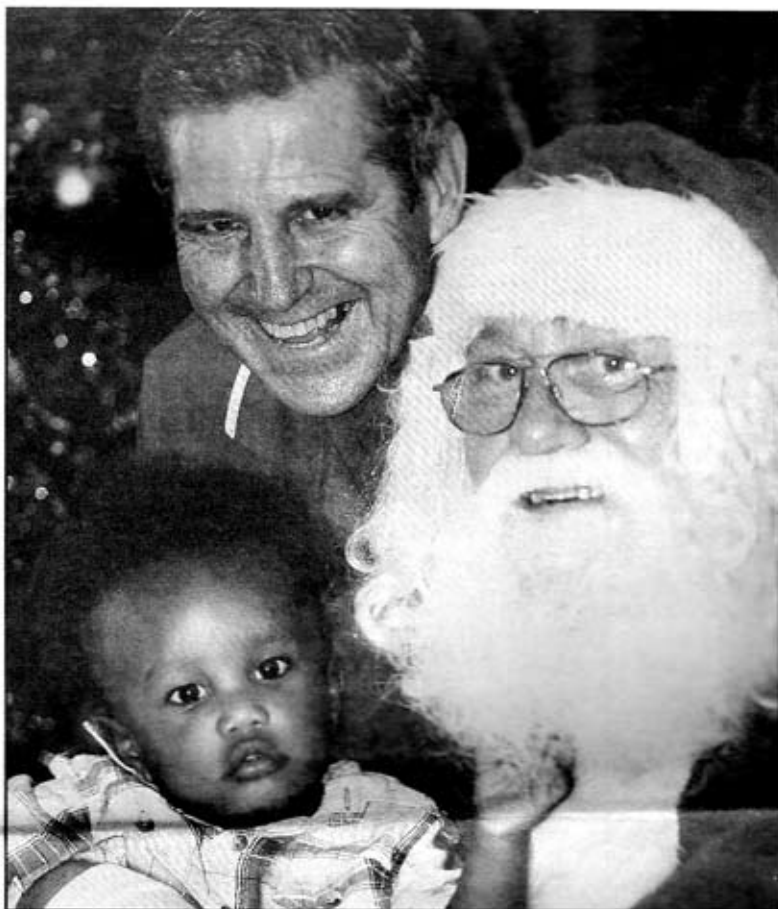
Five-year-old Dunto Stratton eventually had to give his gift bag — nearly as big as he was — to big sister Natarsha, 21, of Wulagi.

"He can't wait to get outside and play with the pirate boat," she said.

Variety NT's Trevor Smith said about 800 toys would be handed out.

"It's been really pleasing to see how well-mannered the kids are," he said. "(And) the volunteers and the sponsors are just terrific."

The big Christmas bash, sponsored by Palmerston Shopping Centre, was thrown for vulnerable children who were nominated by their doctors, hospitals and other carer and welfare agencies.



I'VE BEEN GOOD: Marcus Gama, 15 months, of Nightcliff, with Santa and Variety NT's Trevor Smith. Pictures: PATRINA MALONE



GOOD DAY: Byron, 9, and Callum, 10, with dad Luke Mayo, 30, of Leanyer, with Katie Couyer of Variety NT